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EXTENSION WORK IN RURAL SOCIOLOGY  
EXTENSION SERVICE AND  
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS COOPERATING

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RECREATION NEWSLETTER



December 1939.

Dear Fellow Workers:

The fall trip was a most profitable one to me. I wish I could share it adequately with you. It takes a gifted person to do justice to autumn in New England, as you know, so the very beautiful background of my peregrinations will have to be omitted. Perhaps I can bring a glimpse of the Recreation Congress to those of you who could not attend it, however, and let you have some of the experiences of the succeeding month that seem worth while.

The theme of the Congress was "Recreation and the American way of life." Most of the speakers emphasized the idea that Dr. Carmichael, president of Tufts College, expressed cogently when he said, "It cannot be emphasized too much, it seems to me, that democracy is an unstable chemical compound, and we have to have the conditions just right if it is going to continue. I believe that those conditions are pretty largely within the individuals who make up the democracy. I believe also that the conditions that make individuals good citizens of a democracy are, many of them, the result of the whole series of factors, teamwork, compromise, understanding, social relationships - factors that come out of a properly conceived recreational program."

The outstanding feature of the Congress for me was the opportunity to exchange views with the well assorted group of more than 1,200 people who were in attendance. The Extension Service was represented by about 25 people from nine States. Abundant time was allowed for meeting people and talking over problems and interests. Those of us who occasionally have a hand in arranging conferences might well consider the plan that has been used for these meetings for many years. Discussion groups begin at 9:15 a.m., so that special breakfast meetings may be comfortably managed. The first day there are two periods between 9:15 and 12:30 during which five or more subjects are offered for discussion. After that there is but one discussion period in the morning, ending at 10:45. A general session starts at 11 o'clock when 7-minute reports are made upon the discussions of the previous day. Another hour and a half is spent with discussion groups in the afternoon, finishing at 3. The rest of the afternoon is free for conferences, extra group meetings, and training sessions in subject-matter. The evening assembly begins at 8:15 and lasts an hour and a half. There is none of the usual rush and weariness. Participation in the meetings is always lively, for the delegates are not worn out with long speeches. If a group wants to pursue an interest further, there is ample free time to do it. The plan seems like an exceptionally sound one to me, especially when compared with the interminable, numbing, speech-filled meetings I frequently have to attend.





If you have access to the Congress proceedings you will enjoy the panel of college presidents, Dr. Kingdon's address, and the summarizers' reports, especially Mr. Gordon's excellent statement on rural problems. He painted a brief but telling picture of rural needs, then summarized pointedly seven of the topics that were discussed. Of qualifications for service in the rural field he said, "These successful people have that 'something' which a familiarity with rural ways may provide one; what Dr. Overstreet expressed as 'wisdom with people,' faith in the job, a ripe experience, the gold prospector's urge to find in the 'pan' of his daily contacts now and then a flake, or even, perhaps, a nugget of priceless human talent and human virtue. These are qualifications that count." On the subject of volunteer leader training he points out that what is needed is "Assistance, less perhaps with methods and techniques, rather with building a spirit of camaraderie, a faith in what they are doing, and a due and generous recognition for what they do. We are charged by at least one of our group with overlooking excellent talent in every rural community." I should like to quote the whole paper.

Some of the things I heard and saw in Boston and elsewhere are:

The county recreation agents in New Hampshire train and use "flying squads" of older boys and girls, who direct recreation programs of various kinds for club or community groups. I saw one of the teams get ready for action.

The older boys and girls in Hillsboro County, New Hampshire, cleaned up, built equipment, and assisted in supervising Brookline Beach, a former community sore spot. One of the recreation committee members said, "It is not just that the beach has been a safe place this summer, but taking the responsibility for it has done so much for the young people - and their parents. It sounds foolish but really this isn't the same town!"

A chorus of adults from seven or eight centers around Manchester practice weekly at the Academy under the direction of the head master. They have sung together for many years and had but two leaders in all this time, neither of whom has been paid. Indeed, judging by the tales they tell of their Christmas parties, the leader rewards the singers for letting him lead them!

Thirty-three 4-H Clubs in Delaware County, New York, costumed and practiced the folk dance or song they liked best during the year and presented them in a county festival in which 1,400 boys and girls took part.

In Genesee County, New York, the Recreation Council sponsored square dances and played party games as a free attraction at the fair. Both 4-H and adult groups took part.

As many as 50 communities in Arkansas are building home-made stages. The handicraft specialist has given demonstrations on constructing curtains, screens, and lighting equipment, while the recreation specialist has helped with the general planning.



You, too, probably saw the item that appeared in the October newspapers saying that metallurgists are working on the problem of fatigue in steel. Unless machines are allowed to rest the metal in them breaks down in much the same way that human beings do. Men take care that machines go off duty regularly. Isn't it queer that they don't do as much for themselves?

There will be a round table on extension problems at the meeting of the Rural Sociological Society of America in Philadelphia, December 27 to 29.

#### Speakers of Several Varieties

Here are some unusually good speakers I have either enjoyed myself or heard about during this year:

Dr. Lee Vincent, child psychologist, Merrill-Palmer School, Detroit, Michigan, spoke very effectively at Farm and Home Week in Ames, Iowa, on "New approaches to understanding our children" and "Youth meets the world."

Dr. Edgar Dale, Visual Education Department, University of Ohio, Columbus, made the fundamentals underlying the readability of bulletins clear and attractive to use to the Extension staff members at Columbus.

Dr. William Blatz, child psychologist, University of Toronto, spoke on "Adjusted youth in maladjusted times" and "Children's goals and parental influence."

Rev. Michael J. Ahern, President of the Adult Education Council of Greater Boston, discussed "Trends in public recreation." He has many other interests and exceptional ability to express them.

Dr. Frank Kingdon, President of the Newark University, Newark, New Jersey, gave a clear and forceful address on the "Pursuit of happiness" at the Recreation Congress.

#### Festivals

The September 1939 number of Childhood Education is written on the theme of festivals. Two of the excellent articles are "Festival making the means of growth" and "How a community festival contributes to democratic living."

A Creative Community Christmas, by A. D. Zanzig in the November 1939 number of Recreation is not only a delightful description of a Christmas festival but also a complete discussion of how a festival may be developed by a group of people.





A few copies of Pageants and Plays, that contains excerpts from the 1938 annual Extension Service reports and some sample programs of festivals may be borrowed by writing to me.

#### Motion Pictures

Motion Pictures in Sports is a pamphlet that contains a bibliography and also a film list, together with a directory of commercial and educational film services. It is available for a small charge from the National Section on Women's Athletics of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, 1201 Sixteenth Street, NW., Washington, D. C.

1000 and One, Blue Book of Non-Theatrical Films is an Educational Screen publication containing a comprehensive list of motion-picture films available for recreational purposes. The booklet may be purchased from Educational Screen, 64 East Lake Street, Chicago, Illinois.

The United States Travel Bureau of the National Parks Service, Washington, D. C., lends motion-picture films on such subject as transportation, communication, sports, and scenic areas.

The Commission on Human Relations, Motion Picture Project of the Progressive Education Association, 108 East Eighty-ninth Street, New York City, not only rents a collection of films upon which discussions of human relations may be based but also has on its staff Mr. James P. Mitchell, who is available as a discussion leader at no expense except for travel.

The City - a four-reel, forty-four-minute motion picture, was produced by the American Institute of Planners, through a \$50,000 grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, to dramatize the need for civic planning. It may be obtained through the World Pictures Corporation, 729 Seventh Avenue, New York City. It opens with pictures of the "old swimmin' hole" in New England village, where "the town was us and we were part of it," then moves swiftly to factory and mining towns, where children play in the shadow of factories and mills, and to the metropolis, where life is dominated even more by the machine. The film would form a good basis for discussion in youth groups, offering as it does vivid pictures of the difficulties of city life as well as the values in living in a planned community. The scenario is by Pare Lorentz (who did The River), Lewis Mumford, and Henwar Rodakiewicz. The musical score is by Aaron Copeland and Max Goberman.

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington will form an excellent basis for discussion especially if young voters are led to question its accuracy and fairness in the light of their knowledge of local politics.

Teaching Film Custodians, Inc., is a nonprofit membership corporation formed to cooperate with the motion-picture industry in promoting the production and use by schools of educational motion pictures. By arrangement with a number of the leading motion-picture distributors, a number



of noncurrent theatrical short subjects have been reviewed by a committee of educators. These films have been made available for distribution to schools at very moderate rentals. They are listed in A Catalog of Films for Classroom Use, published by Teaching Film Custodians, Inc., 25 West Forty-third Street, New York City, for a small charge. Approximately fifty sports films and seven health films are included in the listings.

Historical Films Institute, that was described in the last news letter, has moved from the address that was given and left no forwarding address. I have been unable to locate it through other agencies so suppose that it has gone out of business.

#### Program Service

A noncommercial project called Junior Program, Inc., with offices at 221 West Fifty-seventh Street, New York City, has been developed as a national organization to promote good programs of entertainment for children. It offers operas and plays and is the outgrowth of many successful Saturday programs conducted at nominal costs in school auditoriums. Mrs. Dorothy L. McFadden is the executive director.

#### Recreation Training Institutes

- January 4-31. National Recreation Association Institute, Birmingham, Alabama. For information write to the Community Chest, 109 North Nineteenth Street, Birmingham.
- February 5 - National Recreation Association Institute, Denver,  
March 1. Colorado. For information write to Mr. W. Earl Prosser, Community Chest, 314 Fourteenth Street, Denver.
- January 2-26. January Recreation Session, conducted by School of Education, New York University. For information write to Dr. Jay B. Nash, New York University, New York City.

#### Books Costing \$1 or Less

Town Building, by Bernard Smith. Dallas Texas. Holland's Institute, Holland's Magazine.

In three major sections: I. Social, II. Economic, and III. Governmental, Mr. Smith discusses community needs and ways of meeting them. In the foreword, he says, "The town may be bound in ugliness, it may have economic ills threatening its existence, it may not have a single building of which to be proud; but once the people begin saying 'We' and not 'They,' things begin to happen."

Whirling Maiden, by Janet E. Tobbitt. 14 pp. Published by the Author, 430 West One Hundred and Nineteenth Street, New York City. 1939.

Seventeen singing games with music and clear directions. A few may be familiar. All are useful.





A Study of 4-H Local Leadership in St. Lawrence County, New York, by Bert J. Rogers. United States Department of Agriculture, Extension Service Circular 314. 37 pp. Washington, D. C., August 1939. mimeographed.

Five important findings from the study as listed on the title page are: "1. Among the leadership jobs, those with which the leaders had the most difficulty were: Attending county-wide leader-training meetings, attending county-wide 4-H Club events, and planning regular 4-H meetings. 2. The kinds of assistance most appreciated by leaders were: The leaders' handbook, visits with the agent at leader's home, leader-training meetings in subject matter, project bulletins, and visits with the agent at club meetings. 3. The average number of hours a year devoted to leadership work was 103 for the men and 140 for the women. The jobs taking the most time were: Attending and guiding regular 4-H Club meetings, and attending county, district, and State 4-H events. 4. The effectiveness of leaders tended to increase as they devoted more time to leadership. Women appeared to be relatively more effective than men leaders. Teachers were apparently more successful than leaders in other occupations. 5. Helping boys and girls is the greatest satisfaction derived from 4-H leadership."

Selected List of 10-Cent Books, prepared by Mary Lincoln Morse, revised by Alice Temple. Association for Childhood Education, 1201 Sixteenth Street, NW., Washington, D. C.

A classified list of accurate and authentic books available in 10-cent editions.

Uses for Waste Materials, compiled by the Committee on Equipment and Supplies, Association for Childhood Education, 1201 Sixteenth Street, NW., Washington, D. C.

A bulletin presented, the committee says, "Not with the idea that anything mentioned herein is to be substituted for more desirable media of use and expression but rather as supplementary material which has educative value and challenges ingenuity when other means are limited."

Firelight Entertainments, by Margaret K. Soifer. American Camping Association, Inc., 330 South State Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Evening programs based on cowboys, gypsies, Indians, hoboes, lumberjacks, pioneers, pirates, and other picturesque people.

Children's Masterwork Hour, by Julia Cummings Sutton. American Camping Association, 330 South State Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Programs of records with descriptive comments about the composers, the compositions, and the musicians.

Forum Planning handbook; prepared for study and discussion by John W. Studebaker and Chester S. Williams. American Association for Adult Education, 60 East Forty-second Street, New York, Washington, D. C., 1939. 71 pp.



In this handbook the authors have attempted "to put into brief and readable form that body of practical experience (in school administered forums) on which our agencies of public education may build permanent and growing programs for improved citizenship." They give details of the cost of operations of all kinds of forums; discuss various types of leadership and administrations; offer practical suggestions on methods and techniques of organization and administration; indicate what form State and Federal aid may take; deal with the practical questions of finding speakers, conducting meetings, gaining the support of the community, organizing advisory committees, and obtaining publicity; and list questions for discussion and study at the end of each of the seven chapters.

The final chapter on "The Questions Before Us," carries clear and explicit answers to questions about leadership, forum techniques, and problems of promotion and policy.

#### Books You May Want To See

How To Enjoy Reading, by Charles Lee. Published by Waverley House, Boston, 1939.

How to buy the books you really want and how to enjoy reading the books you buy. A book-critic's guide, written in a practical, amusing vein, to help booklovers get the most out of their reading.

Creative Music in the Home, by Satis W. Coleman. 399 pp. Published by New York John Day Co., Inc. 1939.

Four hundred pages, helped with more than five hundred illustrations, on the how and why of making and playing every kind of musical instrument. Almost anybody could play something after studying it.

Radio Writing, by Max Wiley of the Columbia Broadcasting System. Published by Farrar & Rinehardt Inc., New York.

This will be of interest to those who write scripts.

Owatonna, by Edgar B. Wesley. 168 pp. Minneapolis, The University of Minnesota Press. 1938.

An informal biography of a southeastern Minnesota community, in which the evolution of the patterns of earning -- and enjoying -- a living are traced against the background of westward trek and settlement. Through the patterns of an evolving social and economic community, there runs the thread of the older culture inherited from the traditions of the pioneers and transformed by the conditions of the frontier. Church groups kept interest in education alive till local initiative developed a comprehensive public-school system and one of the most thriving private academies of the State. Native and foreign stocks contributed music and art activities and a lively controversial press to make the community the cultural capital of the region. Business and industrial leaders have accepted civic







responsibility and leadership to an unusual extent; the result has been reflected in the town's unusual prosperity, which in turn has flowed freely into its cultural life. (From the Journal of Adult Education, vol. IX, No. 3.)

Enrichment of the Common Life, by Melvin E. Haggerty. 36 pp. Minneapolis, The University of Minnesota Press. 1938.

The latest expression of this local cultural vitality in Owatonna is the Art Education Project, initiated by the late Melvin E. Haggerty, Dean of the University of Minnesota. Dean Haggerty's "Enrichment of the Common Life" tells of this vigorous community experiment in art appreciation and expression -- from the grade school to the individual home. Here a venture in indigenous art education is briefly but persuasively described. It links intimately into the other adult-education activities of a predominantly agricultural community and suggests how real the opportunities are for the extension of cultural education upward to all age and interest levels of our American Middletowns. (From the Journal of Adult Education, vol. IX, No. 3.)

American Folk Plays, edited, with an introduction -- American Folk Drama in the Making, by Frederick H. Koch. 592 pp. New York, D. Appleton-Century Company Inc. 1939.

Plays written by Professor Koch's students that have been produced by the Carolina Playmakers and other groups. Full-page photographs of original productions are included.

Holiday Handicraft, by Neva R. Jordan. 245 pp. New York. Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938.

Very easy-to-make and inexpensive favors and decorations, toys, and costumes for all the usual holidays and a few others. Well illustrated by author.

Rural Community Organization, by Dwight Sanderson and Robert A. Polson. 448 pp. New York, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1939.

This complete textbook on the community and community organization includes a discussion of the significance of the community as a way of life. "The rural community exists not by itself but as a part of our whole social and administrative structure." In the final chapter of the book -- Rural Community Organization in National Life, the authors say "the rural community with its village center and open country is the form of 'rurbanization' which seems to have the most promise for obtaining the values of a rural civic life, a unit of rural civilization."

Agriculture in Modern Life, by O. E. Baker, Ralph Borsodi, and M. L. Wilson. 303 pp., illus. New York, Harper & Brothers. 1939.



Part I of this book by O. E. Baker is written under the broad title "Our Rural People," and is not devoted entirely to a discussion of population. His final chapter is The Conservation of Human Resources.

Mr. Borsodi discusses A Plan for Rural Life, describing his experiment in management in Suffern.

Science and Folklore in Rural Life is Mr. Wilson's subject. He subdivides it into "Patterns of rural cultures," "Folklore farming and scientific, commercial agriculture," and "The search for new rural culture patterns."

Part IV - The Future of Rural Life is a fascinating dialog among the three authors. The whole of this fine book will be interesting and valuable to anyone working with rural groups.

You will be interested in the folk material by Richard Chase that has been supplied by the 4-H Club Department in Virginia. Mr. Chase's work with leader training groups over the State has been valuable. He may be available for work in other States. He can be reached at Glade Springs, Virginia.

By the time this reaches you, the holidays will be with us again. May your Christmas be a joyous one and your New Year full of good health, needed work, real satisfactions, and happiness!

Cordially yours,

*Ella Gardner*

Ella Gardner,  
Recreation Specialist.

Enclosure.

Circular Letter:

Copy for: Field Coordination  
Subject-Matter  
Mr. Brigham  
Files  
Miss Gardner

Sent to: Rural Sociologists and Recreation Specialists  
Miss Gardner's Mailing List  
State Club Leaders  
County Home Dem. Agents in California.

